בס"ד
Fill Your Own Cup – Year Four
Midrash – Session Two
Rabba Yaffa Epstein
yepstein@jewishedproject.org

# Fill Your Own Cup – Fall Series – Reading the Parsha Through the Eyes of the Midrash

*Session Two - Noah*

**1) Indigo Girls, The Wood Song, Swamp Ophelia**

*Now I see we're in the boat in two by twos*
*Only the heart that we have for a tool we could use*
*And the very close quarters are hard to get used to*
*Love weighs the hull down with its weight*
*But the wood is tired and the wood is old*
*And we'll make it fine if the weather holds*
*But if the weather holds, we'll have missed the point*
*That's where we need to go*

**2) Genesis 6: 9 – 10**

This is the line of Noah.—Noah was a righteous man; he was blameless in his age; Noah walked with God.—
Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

**בראשית ו:ט-י**

אֵלֶּה תוֹלְדֹת נֹחַ נֹחַ אִישׁ צַדִּיק תָּמִים הָיָה בְּדֹרֹתָיו
אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים הִתְהַלֶּךְ־נֹחַ:
וַיּוֹלֶד נֹחַ שְׁלֹשָׁה בָנִים אֶת־שֵׁם אֶת־חָם וְאֶת־יָפֶת:

**3) Genesis 7:13 - 23**

That same day Noah and Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, went into the ark, with Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons—they and all beasts of every kind, all cattle of every kind, all creatures of every kind that creep on the earth, and all birds of every kind, every bird, every winged thing.
They came to Noah into the ark, two each of all flesh in which there was breath of life.
Thus they that entered comprised male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him. And GOD shut him in.
The Flood continued forty days on the earth, and the waters increased and raised the ark so that it rose above the earth.
The waters swelled and increased greatly upon the earth, and the ark drifted upon the waters.
When the waters had swelled much more upon the earth, all the highest mountains everywhere under the sky were covered.
Fifteen cubits higher did the waters swell, as the mountains were covered.
And all flesh that stirred on earth perished—birds, cattle, beasts, and all the things that swarmed upon the earth, and all humankind.
All in whose nostrils was the merest breath of life, all that was on dry land, died.
All existence on earth was blotted out—humans, cattle, creeping things, and birds of the sky; they were blotted out from the earth. Only *(Ach)* Noah was left, and those with him in the ark.

**בראשית ז – יג – כג**

בְּעֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה בָּא נֹחַ וְשֵׁם־וְחָם וְיֶפֶת
בְּנֵי־נֹחַ וְאֵשֶׁת נֹחַ וּשְׁלֹשֶׁת נְשֵׁי־בָנָיו אִתָּם
אֶל־הַתֵּבָה:
הֵמָּה וְכָל־הַחַיָּה לְמִינָהּ וְכָל־הַבְּהֵמָה לְמִינָהּ
וְכָל־הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ לְמִינֵהוּ וְכָל־
עוֹף לְמִינֵהוּ כֹּל צִפּוֹר כָּל־כָּנָף:
וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־נֹחַ אֶל־הַתֵּבָה שְׁנַיִם שְׁנַיִם מִכָּל־
הַבָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ רוּחַ חַיִּים:
וְהַבָּאִים זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה מִכָּל־בָּשָׂר בָּאוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר
צִוָּה אֹתוֹ אֱלֹהִים וַיִּסְגֹּר יְהוָה בַּעֲדוֹ:
וַיְהִי הַמַּבּוּל אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּרְבּוּ
הַמַּיִם וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֶת־הַתֵּבָה וַתָּרָם מֵעַל
הָאָרֶץ:
וַיִּגְבְּרוּ הַמַּיִם וַיִּרְבּוּ מְאֹד עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַתֵּלֶךְ
הַתֵּבָה עַל־פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם:
וְהַמַּיִם גָּבְרוּ מְאֹד מְאֹד עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיְכֻסּוּ
כָּל־הֶהָרִים הַגְּבֹהִים אֲשֶׁר־תַּחַת כָּל־
הַשָּׁמָיִם:
חֲמֵשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה אַמָּה מִלְמַעְלָה גָּבְרוּ הַמָּיִם
וַיְכֻסּוּ הֶהָרִים:
וַיִּגְוַע כָּל־בָּשָׂר | הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ בָּעוֹף
וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבַחַיָּה וּבְכָל־הַשֶּׁרֶץ הַשֹּׁרֵץ עַל־
הָאָרֶץ וְכֹל הָאָדָם:
כֹּל אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁמַת־רוּחַ חַיִּים בְּאַפָּיו מִכֹּל
אֲשֶׁר בֶּחָרָבָה מֵתוּ:
וַיִּמַח אֶת־כָּל־הַיְקוּם | אֲשֶׁר | עַל־פְּנֵי
הָאֲדָמָה מֵאָדָם עַד־בְּהֵמָה עַד־רֶמֶשׂ וְעַד־
עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיִּמָּחוּ מִן־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּשָּׁאֶר אַךְ־
נֹחַ וַאֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ בַּתֵּבָה:

בס"ד
Fill Your Own Cup – Year Four
Midrash – Session Two
Rabba Yaffa Epstein
yepstein@jewishedproject.org

| **4) Genesis 8:15 – 20** | **בראשית ח:טו - כ** |
|---|---|
| God spoke to Noah, saying,<br>"Come out of the ark, together with your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives.<br>Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you: birds, animals, and everything that creeps on earth; and let them swarm on the earth and be fertile and increase on earth."<br>So Noah came out, together with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives.<br>Every animal, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that stirs on earth came out of the ark by families.<br>Then Noah built an altar to GOD and, taking of every pure animal and of every pure bird, he offered burnt offerings on the altar. | וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־נֹחַ לֵאמֹר׃<br>צֵא מִן־הַתֵּבָה אַתָּה וְאִשְׁתְּךָ וּבָנֶיךָ<br>וְנְשֵׁי־בָנֶיךָ אִתָּךְ׃<br>כָּל־הַחַיָּה אֲשֶׁר־אִתְּךָ מִכָּל־בָּשָׂר בָּעוֹף<br>וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל־הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־<br>הָאָרֶץ (הוצא) [הַיְצֵא] אִתָּךְ וְשָׁרְצוּ<br>בָאָרֶץ וּפָרוּ וְרָבוּ עַל־הָאָרֶץ׃<br>וַיֵּצֵא־נֹחַ וּבָנָיו וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּנְשֵׁי־בָנָיו אִתּוֹ׃<br>כָּל־הַחַיָּה כָּל־הָרֶמֶשׂ וְכָל־הָעוֹף כֹּל<br>רוֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתֵיהֶם יָצְאוּ<br>מִן־הַתֵּבָה׃<br>וַיִּבֶן נֹחַ מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה וַיִּקַּח מִכֹּל |
| | הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּהֹרָה וּמִכֹּל הָעוֹף הַטָּהוֹר<br>וַיַּעַל עֹלֹת בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ׃ |

| **5) Ecclesiastes 9:1-2** | **קהלת ט:א-ב** |
|---|---|
| For all this I noted, and I ascertained all this: that the actions of even the righteous and the wise are determined by God. Even love! Even hate! Humankind knows none of these in advance—<br>none! For the same fate is in store for all: for the righteous, and for the wicked; for the good and pure, and for the impure; for one who sacrifices, and for one who does not; for one who is pleasing, and for one who is displeasing; and for one who swears, and for one who shuns oaths. | כִּי אֶת־כָּל־זֶה נָתַתִּי אֶל־לִבִּי וְלָבוּר אֶת־כָּל־<br>זֶה אֲשֶׁר הַצַּדִּיקִים וְהַחֲכָמִים וַעֲבָדֵיהֶם בְּיַד<br>הָאֱלֹהִים גַּם־אַהֲבָה גַּם־שִׂנְאָה אֵין יוֹדֵעַ<br>הָאָדָם הַכֹּל לְפָנֵיהֶם׃<br>הַכֹּל כַּאֲשֶׁר לַכֹּל מִקְרֶה אֶחָד לַצַּדִּיק וְלָרָשָׁע<br>לַטּוֹב וְלַטָּהוֹר וְלַטָּמֵא וְלַזֹּבֵחַ וְלַאֲשֶׁר אֵינֶנּוּ<br>זֹבֵחַ כַּטּוֹב כֶּחָטֶא הַנִּשְׁבָּע כַּאֲשֶׁר שְׁבוּעָה<br>יָרֵא׃ |

| **6) Vayikra Rabbah 20:1** | **ויקרא רבה כ:א** |
|---|---|
| **After the death of the two sons of Aaron (Lev. 16:1).** R. Shimon opened: *All things come alike to all; there is one fate for the righteous and for the wicked (Eccl. 9:2*).<br>**"For the righteous" – this is Noah, of whom it is said: a righteous man** (Gen. 6:9). R. Yohanan said in the name of R. Eliezer son of R. Yose the Galilean: When Noah came out of the ark, a lion struck him and maimed him, so that he was not fit to offer sacrifices, and Shem his son offered in his place.<br>"And for the wicked" – this is Pharaoh Necho. When he sought to sit on Solomon's throne, not knowing its workings, a lion struck him and maimed him. This one died lame and that one died lame. That is what is written: one fate for the righteous and for the wicked. | **אחרי מות שני בני אהרן.** ר' שמעון פתח (קהלת ט): הכל כאשר לכל מקרה אחד לצדיק ולרשע. לצדיק, זה נח, שנאמר בו (בראשית ו): איש צדיק. אמר ר' יוחנן בשם רבי אליעזר בנו של רבי יוסי הגלילי: נח כשיצא מן התיבה הכישו הארי ושברו ולא היה כשר להקריב והקריב שם בנו תחתיו. ולרשע, זה פרעה נכה, כיון שביקש לישב על הכסא של שלמה לא היה יודע מנהגיו, הכישו ארי ושברו. זה מת צולע וזה מת צולע, היינו דכתיב: מקרה אחד לצדיק ולרשע. |

| **7) Midrash Tanchuma, Noach 9** | **מדרש תנחומא, נח ט** |
|---|---|
| **Go forth from the ark (Gen. 8:16).** Scripture says elsewhere in allusion to this verse: Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks to Thy name; the righteous shall crown themselves because of me; for Thou wilt deal bountifully with me (Ps. 142:8). Bring my soul out of prison refers to Noah, who was imprisoned in the ark.<br>R. Levi said: Neither Noah nor his sons were able to sleep during the entire twelve months (in the ark) because they were obliged to feed the animals, the beasts, and the birds. R. Akiba stated that they even brought into the ark tree branches for the elephants and glass beads for the ostriches. Some of | **צא** מִן הַתֵּבָה. זֶה שֶׁאָמַר הַכָּתוּב: הוֹצִיאָה מִמַּסְגֵּר נַפְשִׁי לְהוֹדוֹת אֶת שְׁמֶךָ בִּי יַכְתִּרוּ צַדִּיקִים כִּי תִגְמֹל עָלָי (תהלים קמב, ח). הוֹצִיאָה מִמַּסְגֵּר נַפְשִׁי, שֶׁהָיָה נֹחַ סָגוּר בַּתֵּבָה. אָמַר רַבִּי לֵוִי, כָּל אוֹתָן שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ לֹא טָעַם טַעַם שֵׁנָה, לֹא נֹחַ וְלֹא בָנָיו, שֶׁהָיוּ זְקוּקִין לָזוּן אֶת הַבְּהֵמָה וְאֶת הַחַיָּה וְאֶת הָעוֹפוֹת. רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא אוֹמֵר, אֲפִלּוּ שְׁבִשְׁתִּין לְפִילִין וּזְכוּכִיּוֹת לְנַעֲמִיּוֹת הִכְנִיסוּ בְּיָדָן |

| | |
|---|---|
| the animals had to be fed at the second hour in the night and others at the third hour of the night. | לָזוּן אוֹתָן. יֵשׁ בְּהֵמָה שֶׁאוֹכֶלֶת לִשְׁתֵּי שָׁעוֹת בַּלַּיְלָה, וְיֵשׁ אוֹכֶלֶת לִשְׁלֹשָׁה. |
| Further proof that they did not sleep is presented to us by R. Yohanan. **He tells us in the name of R. Eliezer the son of R. Yosé the Galilean that because Noah once delayed feeding a lion, the lion bit him so severely that he left the ark maimed,** as it is said: And only Noah was left (Gen. 7:23). The word ah ("only," also "to be afflicted") indicates that his body was no longer whole. He became, thereby, unfit to bring sacrifices to the altar, and his son Shem had to do it in his stead. Concerning him it is said: Behold, the righteous shall be made whole in the earth (Prov. 11:31). | תֵּדַע לְךָ, שֶׁלֹּא טָעֲמוּ טַעַם שְׁנָה, דְּאָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר בְּרַבִּי יוֹסֵי הַגְּלִילִי, פַּעַם אַחַת שָׁהָה נֹחַ לָזוּן אֶת הָאֲרִי, הִכִּישׁוֹ הָאֲרִי וְיָצָא צוֹלֵעַ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וַיִּשָּׁאֵר אַךְ נֹחַ. אַךְ, שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה שָׁלֵם וְלֹא הָיָה כָּשֵׁר לְהַקְרִיב קָרְבָּן וְהִקְרִיב שֵׁם בְּנוֹ תַּחְתָּיו. וְעָלָיו נֶאֱמַר, הֵן צַדִּיק בָּאָרֶץ יְשֻׁלָּם (משלי יא, לא). |
| R. Huna said in the name of R. Yosé: He left the ark coughing and spitting blood because of a cold he had contracted, and it is for this reason that Scripture states: Bring out of prison my soul … the righteous shall crown themselves because of Me (Ps. 142:8), that is, through me the Holy Blessed One took a crown. They shall reason: Though Noah was righteous, he was not wholly righteous. The Holy Blessed One, nevertheless performed miracles in his behalf, as it is said: He delivereth him that is innocent (Job 22:30). In this verse i-naki ("innocent") should be interpreted as velo naki, that is, he was not wholly righteous. How many more miracles would God have performed in his behalf if he had been wholly righteous! | רַב הוּנָא בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי יוֹסֵי אָמַר, יָצָא גּוֹנֵחַ וְכוֹהֶה דָּם מִן הַצִּנָּה. לְפִיכָךְ הוּא אוֹמֵר, הוֹצִיאָה מִמַּסְגֵּר נַפְשִׁי וְגוֹ' בִּי יַכְתִּירוּ צַדִּיקִים. שֶׁבִּי נוֹטֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא כֶּתֶר, שֶׁאוֹמֵר, וּמָה, נֹחַ שֶׁהָיָה צַדִּיק וְלֹא הָיָה צַדִּיק שָׁלֵם, כָּךְ עָשָׂה לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא נְסִים, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: יְמַלֵּט אִי נָקִי (איוב כב, ל), וְלֹא נָקִי. אִם הָיָה צַדִּיק גָּמוּר, עַל אַחַת כַּמָּה וְכַמָּה. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **8) Midrash Tehillim 37:1**<br>**Of David. Do not be vexed by evildoers (Ps. 37:1).** This is what Scripture says: Let your heart not envy sinners (Prov. 23:17). Then in what should you be zealous? In the fear of the Lord all day long (ibid.).... Had Avraham not been zealous for the Holy Blessed One, he would not have acquired heaven and earth.<br>And when was he zealous? When he said to Malki-Tzedek: How did you come out of the ark? He said to him: Through the tzedakah that we did. He said to him: What tzedakah could you have done? Were there poor people there? Was there anyone there but Noah and his sons? To whom did you do tzedakah? He said to him: To the beasts, the cattle, and the birds. We did not sleep all night but kept placing food before this one and before that one. Once we were late, and my father came out broken.<br>At that moment Avraham said: If these – had they not done tzedakah with cattle, beasts, and birds, they would not have come out of there; and because he was late once, he nearly received his due and was broken – then I, if I do it with human beings, who are in the likeness and image of the angels, how much more so will I be saved from harm! Immediately: He planted an eshel (Gen. 21:33) – food, drink, and escort. And so Solomon said: And I saw all labor and all skill in work, that it is a man's rivalry with his fellow (Eccl. 4:4). That is why: let your heart not envy sinners. | **מדרש תהילים לז:א**<br>**לדוד אל תתחר במרעים.** זה שאמר הכתוב (משלי כג יז) אל יקנא לבך בחטאים. ובמה תקנא (שם) ביראת ה' כל היום.<br>שאלמלא הקנאה שקינא אברהם להקב"ה לא היה קונה שמים וארץ. ואימתי קינא. כשאמר למלכי צדק כיצד יצאתם מן התיבה. אמר לו בצדקה שהיינו עושים. אמר לו וכי מה צדקה היה לכם לעשות וכי עניים היו שם והלא לא היה אלא נח ובניו ועל מי הייתם עושים צדקה. אמר לו על החיה והבהמה והעוף. לא היינו ישנים כל הלילה אלא היינו נותנין לפני זה ולפני זה. פעם אחת איחרנו את עצמנו ויצא אבי משובר. אותה שעה אמר אברהם מה אלו אלולא שעשו צדקה עם בהמה חיה ועוף לא היו יוצאין משם ובשביל שאיחר עצמו כמעט קיבל שכרו ונשבר. אני אם אעשה עם בני אדם שהם בדמות וצלם של המלאכים על אחת כמה וכמה שאנצל מן הפגעים. מיד (בראשית כא לג) ויטע אש"ל. אכילה שתיה לויה. וכן שלמה אמר (קהלת ד ד) וראיתי את כל עמל ואת כל כשרון המעשה כי היא קנאת איש מרעהו. לכך אל יקנא לבך בחטאים: |

**9) An Ark of Chesed, Rabbi Chaim Yaakov Goldvicht, Yeshivat Kerem BeYavneh**
https://www.kby.org/harav/view.asp?id=3558

In this way, the ark served as a "Beit Midrash" for the study of chesed. In it they learned to share their confined space with others. In it they were trained consistently to dedicate themselves, with all their might, to others. In it they learned and were brought to understand that their lives are dependent on complete dedication to the mission of an enduring world, chesed…
The chesed that Noach performed with the animals in the ark is what turned the attribute of justice that was aimed towards him into an attribute of mercy and grace. It was this lesson of chesed that inspired Avraham to embrace this trait…
In the ark the spiritual character of Noach and his children was shaped and stamped with the seal of chesed, and in this way they became qualified to be the seed of a renewed world. Even Avraham's renown trait of chesed found its roots and sprung forth from this "Beit Midrash" of chesed!

בס"ד
Fill Your Own Cup – Year Four
Midrash – Session Two
Rabba Yaffa Epstein
yepstein@jewishedproject.org

# The Midrashic Canon by Biblical Book

| Book | Halakhic Midrash | Aggadic Midrash |
|---|---|---|
| **Genesis** | — | Bereshit Rabbah (c. 400–450) |
| **Exodus** | Mekhilta de-R. Yishmael (3rd c.) **[School of Yishmael]**<br>Mekhilta de-R. Shimon bar Yohai (3rd c.) **[School of Akiva]** | Shemot Rabbah (10th–12th c.) |
| **Leviticus** | Sifra (3rd c.) **[School of Akiva]** | Vayikra Rabbah (5th c.) |
| **Numbers** | Sifrei Bamidbar (3rd c.) **[School of Yishmael]**<br>Sifrei Zuta (3rd c.) **[School of Akiva]** | Bamidbar Rabbah (12th c.) |
| **Deuteronomy** | Sifrei Devarim (3rd c.) **[School of Akiva]**<br>Midrash Tannaim (3rd c., reconstructed) **[School of Yishmael]** | Devarim Rabbah (c. 450–800) |
| **Megillot** | — | Eikhah Rabbah (5th c.)<br>Shir HaShirim Rabbah (6th c.)<br>Ruth Rabbah (6th c.)<br>Kohelet Rabbah (7th–8th c.)<br>Esther Rabbah I (c. 500) |
| **Psalms** | — | Midrash Tehillim (layers through c. 11th c.) |
| **Whole Torah / cycle** | — | Pesikta de-Rav Kahana (5th c.)<br>Tanḥuma (5th–9th c.)<br>Pirkei de-R. Eliezer (8th c.) |
| **Anthologies** | — | Yalkut Shimoni (13th c.)<br>Midrash HaGadol (13th–14th c., Yemen) |

Dates are approximate dates of final redaction; much of the material is older, and dating is contested.